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UPON THE

Two distinct POWERS, &c.



(Price Six-pence.)

1888

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Two distinct POWERS

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PROPERTIES of the HUMAN SOUL,

V I Z.

The WILL and the UNDERSTANDING.

L O N D O N :

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The two distinct Powers or Properties of the human Soul, viz. The WILL and the UNDERSTANDING.

THE knowledge of the Soul, and the Powers or Properties its bountiful Creator has endowed it with, must, at first sight, appear of the utmost consequence; as that will not only clearly point out to us, according to the constitution of our nature, the several relations we stand in to God as well as one another, and according to our behaviour thereto must be either happy or miserable;

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ble ; but likewise will, when duly consider'd, let us know wherein our strength and wisdom must be founded, that we may be firmly established, and from whence we must have those means, which are necessary to be made use of, in order to attain the one or avoid the other. As then the Will and the Understanding, or what is commonly called Reason, are two distinct Powers or Properties subsisting in the Soul, and have distinct provinces assign'd them for action, and for the use and abuse of which we are accountable to God our Creator, yet we must observe, that they are so closely united, in that spiritual essence, we call the Soul, as not to be divided, so much as in thought. Now the Will is confessedly allowed to be the elective faculty, so that there is no dispute, but that the Will makes choice of the end ; but then the question is, whether or no the Will makes choice of the end of itself, and without consulting the Understanding, or is directed therein by the Understanding. My design then in the following Essay is to shew, that the Will does of itself, without ever consulting the Understanding, or being directed by it, make choice of the end proposed, and that the Understanding is no further concern'd therein, than to point out such means, as to it seems best adapted

adapted to attain that end made choice of by the Will, without gainfaying or contradicting, be the end good or bad. The reasons of this my opinion, I shall humbly submit to the consideration of such Gentlemen as shall be pleased to read this Essay.

Be pleased then to consider what the Soul of Man is, when first infused into the Body; that it has no inherent knowledge of good or bad, but is only endowed with such Powers or Properties as will, when duly cultivated, answer the end for which they were implanted therein. The Soul then being endowed with these Powers, that by the exercise of which, it may know to chuse the good and refuse the evil; they must be, separately consider'd, equal to the task assign'd them, otherwise there would be a defect in the contrivance of that noble Being.

But upon due consideration we find the contrary, and that the Will, when arrived to maturity, is of itself able to make choice of any end that shall be proposed to it, without ever consulting or being directed by the Understanding therein: I say when arrived to maturity, for we cannot but observe, that upon our first coming into the world, we are as impotent in using our spiritual Powers or Properties, as we are our bodily members, and in both cases, are equally

obliged to have recourse to others for their help and assistance, that we may use them aright. Hence it is evident, that our Wills and Understandings, at our first setting out, are altogether subject and under the directions of the Will and Understanding of some other; so that at first our Wills are altogether directed, in the choice of any end that is made by the Will of that person that has the management of us; and in like manner our Understanding is under the same direction in pointing out the means, that may be necessary to be made use of, in order to attain the end made choice of; and by such means, it is plain, that the Soul becomes possessed of such knowledge as may be necessary to attain the end it was designed for. Now every Power that is implanted in the Soul, by whose means it is that the Soul acts visibly, must certainly, separately considered, be partaker of the whole nature of the Soul, consequently whatever knowledge the Soul gets possessed of, every Power implanted therein, must equally be partaker of that knowledge. As the Will then is allowed by all to be the elective faculty, and is truly possessed of all the knowledge that is laid up in the Soul, hence it must follow that the Will, by this knowledge, is as fully qualified to make choice of the end, as the Understanding can be to point

point out the means in order to attain the end made choice of by the Will. And to evince this truth, we need only take a view of the operations of these two Powers or Properties within ourselves, and we shall soon perceive, that the Will makes choice of the end, from self-evident truths. Hence it is, that the Will does not stand in need of the reasoning faculty, to incline it to one end rather than another, but is altogether influenced by the end made choice of. And these truths the Soul gets possessed of, by the instruction of those that have the care of us in our early years, and we are soon able to confirm them by our own observation, and improve them by experience. And all such truths appear self-evident at first sight, from the convenience or inconvenience that arises to ourselves, the Will being influenced or not influenced by such ends. For instance, that the health of our bodies is necessary to our well-being in this life, requires no reasoning to prove it; the Will therefore never enquires of the Understanding, whether or no it should be influenced by that end; but being influenced, Reason immediately points out the means that may be necessary to attain the end; and if its own reason is not sufficiently qualified to direct therein, yet it is able to direct, to call in the assistance of such as are qualified for that purpose.

purpose. But let us consider from whence the various ends which are proposed to the Will do arise, and how they come to be the object of the Will's choice. And here we must know, that the Soul is furnished with various passions and affections, and in the body are many wants and appetites, and when these are excited from outward objects, or from their own real wants, they immediately apply to the Will to be satisfied, and not to the Understanding, for some of them are of such a nature, that there is none, nay there cannot be any reasoning about them; and some others of such a nature, if the Understanding was applied to, and reasoned about them, and hence the choice be made, they must have ever been refused, as being evidently destructive of that happiness, which the Soul of every man is desirous of enjoying. And this as evidently shews, that as there is, and ever has been, such ends proposed by the passions and appetites, that when made choice of, manifestly tend, instead of happiness, to bring on misery and destruction upon the whole man; that such choices cannot be the result of the Understanding, but of the Will, and that too without any regard to the reasoning faculty; and it is as plain, what that end is which influences the Will in such cases, viz. present pleasure or profit. This alone

alone is sufficient to demonstrate, that the government of the Soul is wholly placed in the Will, and that it has no other regard to the Understanding, than to point out the means that may be necessary to attain the end made choice of, whether good or bad, without ever offering to give direction, or even advice, in relation to the end; nor even so much as making one remonstrance, be the end made choice of what it will. And that this is so in fact, a very slight observation of what is acted in our own minds would prove it. But as words and outward actions, are the only signs, by which we are enabled to judge of the inward disposition of another man's Soul; if we will but take a view of, and consider them, we must be convinced that the Will has an absolute power of making the choice of the several ends proposed. In order then to form a judgment herein, we will first consider some actions, which are too visible to be denied, and that too in places, which were undoubtedly founded to cultivate our reason and to teach us the true government of our passions, and by that means to prepare its several members to behave with credit and reputation, in the station they may be called to or designed for; whether the government of the State, the Bar, or the Pulpit; yet even in these places, where the great extent of power reason is endowed with,

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manifestly appears in the acquirements it has made, and does ever make, in the knowledge of arts and sciences; and it is upon these very accounts that reason has been extolled and exalted above the Will, upon a little consideration, we shall soon see that the Will is sole Arbiter of the passions and appetites, and makes its choice of every end altogether independent of reason, even in these places where reason is cultivated to the highest degree, and brought to the greatest perfection. Now happiness, and even present happiness, being the desire of every Soul, whatever object is presented thereto, come from whence it will, is always cloathed in such a dress, as evidently shews, that there is such a pleasure will arise to the Soul in the enjoyment of the object, that the Soul will be pleased therewith; hence the Will makes choice of it, as an end to be obtained, and the Understanding points out the means in order to attain it, without ever reasoning whether the object is duly qualified to give the Soul that satisfaction which is adequate to it. And this is but too manifest in the practice of young gentlemen in those learned bodies; whose passions are high, and appetites strong, and by their daily exercises demonstrate that their reason is as strong, and has been thought rightly proportioned, and every way qualified to govern them; yet upon experience

ence the passion or appetite has been gratified, and brought him under the censure of his superiors; and they, in order to cure him of the vice he has been guilty of, by way of penance, impose an extraordinary exercise, obliging him, upon pain of their further displeasure, to write upon that very vice. For instance, let it be drunkenness: Now what end can influence the Will of a young gentleman to be guilty of this odious crime, when he is in no way of business, that may in the least lead thereto; it must then be either vanity of spirit, which prompts him to vie with his companions who shall drink most, or downright the pleasure of drinking; but it can never be supposed that reason was consulted about it, whether the end proposed, probably no more than being merry together, be commendable or otherwise, but the Will being determined, reason appoints the proper place to atchieve the end, viz. the tavern; the crime being committed, and falling under the notice of his superiors, they impose the penance, viz. to write upon this vice, in order to shew the deformity and ill consequence of it; to do this must be the work of reason. But then it may be asked, what end is there proposed to the Will, that this performance can be the means of attaining, which, according to my scheme, must be the sole cause of it. Fear is one end, that influences

the Will to comply with the order, that he may not be expelled the society; but then there is another end which influences the Will, that it be done well, and set forth in the most odious colours, and all the ill consequences that may attend it fairly drawn out, and that is vanity, or it may be a laudible ambition, that they may know he has made good proficiency in his studies: hence it is plain that the Will makes choice of the end in both cases, and reason points out the means to attain the several ends. For no man will ever say that he is drunk with reason, that is, with the choice of his reason, but yet he must observe, that whatever it may be, that influences the Will to make choice of that end, whether company, or pleasure of drinking, reason only points out the means, without making one remonstrance; for it is often seen, that the gentleman who has just now been exposing the vice, the same objects offering themselves, his Will is again influenced, and reason is so far from opposing, that the same means are made use of as before. Hence we may fairly account for those inconsistencies, which are very apparent, between men's words as well as their writings and their actions, that is, Theory and Practice; which cannot be done upon any other Principles.

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But let us consider this argument in another end which is proposed to the will, wherein all men, even learned and unlearned, high and low, rich and poor, are more or less influenced by it, without ever consulting the Understanding, as a self evident truth, which stands in no need of the reasoning faculty to prove it, *viz.* the getting of money.

Now money being made the standard of commerce, and the means by which we procure to ourselves such things as we really stand in need of, but are in the possession of another, the necessity of obtaining which is self-evident, in order to procure such things as may be necessary to satisfy those craving appetites, which are peremptory in their demands, and we can enjoy no ease nor quiet till they are satisfied. Besides, the conveniences are so many, which accrue to every man who has it in possession, and the numberless inconveniences he is thereby freed from, are so apparent at the first view, that the Will stands in no need of reason to prove the truth of this proposition, consequently makes choice of this end without ever consulting or being directed by it. And that reason is no further concerned, than to point out the means of obtaining it, will be very plain, if we take but a view of the means which are made use of to acquire it, and how they are varied and duly proportioned as the

Will is more or less strongly influenced by the end proposed. The downright covetous man, who places his sole happiness in the possession thereof, his Will must be strongly influenced thereby, and reason, which ever concurs with the Will, points out such means as are rightly proportioned to obtain his desires; and industry and frugality are the common means prescribed by reason for acquiring it, but his Will being very strongly influenced, so these are not duly proportioned thereto: Hence arises those various arts of fraud and couzenage, over-reaching in bargains; taking the advantage of the present necessities of those they may have to deal with, and can't have them supplied from any other quarter, even downright oppression of the poor, or any means whatever, so long as they do not endanger his life; and the only end that influences his Will to take care of that is the love of money; and reason being so united with the Will as not to be separated, must be perfectly acquainted with all the ends the Will is influenced by, consequently proportions the means as the Will is more or less strongly influenced, without ever remonstrating to shew either the badness of the end, or even scrupling to prescribe the most unjustifiable means to attain it. There is another sort of men, whose Will being influenced by idleness and riotous living, and not having an independent fortune; pilfering

pilfering and stealing, and even carrying as it were their lives in their hands, by publickly robbing upon the highway, are prescribed by reason in order to attend the end the Will is influenced by. Now on the contrary, the man whose Will is influenced by the love of money no further than to supply his own and the wants of those that justly depend upon him, and that he may live with decency and reputation according to the station he is placed in, reason prescribes no other means to such a man but the commendable virtues of industry and frugality; these means perfectly concurring with the end the Will was influenced by, and as there was nothing but what was justifiable in the one, so the other is in every point suitable thereto. Hence it is plain, that in all these cases, the Will makes choice of the end, without either consulting or being directed by the Understanding, and that the means prescribed are always agreeable and duly proportioned to attain the end made choice of by the Will, whether good or bad.

But let us consider the passion of anger. Now anger being a sensible perception of some injury received, or affront given, there is a desire raised in the soul by this passion, of having the injury repaired, or the affront acknowledged; and the more or less strongly the Will is influenced thereby, the more or less violent are the means made use of to attain the end proposed.

proposed. When it is moderate, and keeps within due bounds, the Will is no further influenced thereby, than to make choice of such an end, that the injury may be repaired, or that the man be made truly sensible of his fault in giving the affront. And as the Will is the elective faculty, he must make choice of the end proposed, and that too without ever consulting the Understanding; it being a self-evident truth, that whatever injury a man wilfully does to another, he ought to make full reparation for, or whenever he designedly affronts another, he ought to be made sensible of it, and ask pardon; but that reason prescribes the means to attain the end proposed cannot be disputed, and that they are ever duly proportioned thereto, is evident in the present case. For as the end proposed is only to have the loss repaired, or the affront acknowledged, reason prescribes no other means, than what are suitable thereto; such as an amicable agreement, if that can be had; if not, he will, but in the least expensive way, have recourse to the law, which is made to redress such grievances. But if the passion of anger be violently agitated, his demands run high, and the Will being influenced thereby, is in proportion to the violent agitation and high demands of the passion. Hence we may give a fair account of those cruel and barbarous actions, the very hearing of which even shocks the

the soul of every one, where that passion is not predominant; and in some measure to mitigate the black crime, it is commonly said that the man who commits it must be devoid of reason, and yet nothing more false; for upon enquiry it will be found, that it is reason, and only reason, that prescribes the means to attain the end proposed, be those means of what nature soever they will. Now this will appear, if we make but the least observation upon what happens in the world. Observe but two gentlemen, where the one thinks that he is injured by an affront, or some other way, his honour is piqued, and his passion is violently agitated, so that the injury or affront must not be passed by without proper notice, suitable to that punctilio of honour he has conceived. Hence it happens, that no mean way of revenge is to be prosecuted; consequently, according to that false notion of honour, which is but too much countenanced in the world, he demands satisfaction with the point of his sword, as if nothing less than the other's life was sufficient to atone for the offence committed; but then he is so honourable, that he scruples not to run the risque of his own life, and that only with a view, as he conceives, of honourably taking the life of another. Hence it is very plain, that reason does not direct, nor is even consulted in the choice of this end; but then it is

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as plain, that the means made use of to attain the end, must be prescribed by reason, for the Will only makes choice of the end. We may therefore assuredly draw this conclusion, that reason does ever concur with the Will, not only without contradiction, but even without the least remonstrance, be the end made choice of never so base and contradictory to the constitution of our nature, that is, our being and our well-being even in this present life ; but if futurity be brought into the question, it will be a further proof of what I assert, that the Will does solely and of itself make choice of every end, and reason only prescribes the means in order to attain the end made choice of by the Will. But let us take a view of another sort of men, whose passion, upon receiving some injury or affront, is as violently agitated, and the Will as strongly influenced, as in the former case ; so that nothing less than the life of the other will atone for the offence. But then there is another end offers itself, by which the Will is as strongly influenced, and that is the preservation of his own life ; both these ends therefore are made choice of by the Will, and reason, in concurrence therewith, prescribes such means as seem most fitly adapted to attain both the ends. Hence a series of gradations are laid down, in order to take the life of the other without endangering his own, and as regular a proceeding in
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working the series according to proportions, as in any proposition in the mathematicks, and as demonstrative too, in order to come at a proper opportunity of giving the private stab, or dexterously administering the poison'd cup, without suspicion from whence it comes, or who is the principal author thereof. This fully shews, that reason is as much concern'd to work the series in due proportion, in this case, as in a demonstration of any proposition in Euclid. The case would be found the same, *viz.* that the Will does of itself make choice of the end, and that reason does ever concur with the Will, be the end what it will, and does ever duly proportion the means to attain the end made choice of by the Will, without either directing or being consulted therein, if we were to run through the whole circle of virtues and their extremes. I shall therefore mention but one more, and that is, the passion of Love with regard to the other sex. This passion was implanted by our Creator in the soul, in order to propagate our species, and therefore when kept within due bounds, is truly praise-worthy. And here one would think, that if ever reason was consulted in relation to any end whatever, it should be in this; but it is an old observation, that love is blind, that is, ever acts without consulting reason; but the real truth is, that the Will does in this, as in all other cases, of

itself make choice of the end. When therefore an object offers, by which this passion is raised, and put into motion, the more or less the passion is agitated, the more or less strongly is the Will influenced thereby. Hence some very great oddities, and other strange and surprising effects, which are produced by this passion, may be accounted for. Observe the man, in whom, upon the sight of some fair object, this passion is so highly agitated, that in the possession thereof his whole happiness is immediately founded, and consequently the Will, influenc'd thereby, must be as peremptory in the choice of the end, and reason, in concurrence therewith, as violent in prescribing the means; but these sometimes, instead of engaging the fair object to comply with the requests made, occasion such manifest signs of reluctance, that the man is quite astonished; and after some repetitions of his earnest requests, arises to a full denial; and this puts the blood into such a ferment, that the animal spirits, by which the body is connected to the soul, are raised above their due pitch; hence the objects, which must be transmitted by them to the soul, are obstructed, and by this means the soul is rendered inactive, therefore during this fermentation of the blood, he is raging mad. And hence it is that a mad-man is not accountable for his actions, as being no more than a mad animal; and this

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is manifest from the means made use of by those who undertake the cure of them, which is to cool and reduce the blood to its due temperament; this being done, the animal spirits are brought into due order, and transmit the objects to the soul, and the man begins to act suitable to his nature, which is a material body actuated by a spiritual soul endowed with those noble properties, a Will to choose the end, and an Understanding to prescribe the means that may be necessary to attain that end. But it is never so much as pretended that love is either govern'd or guided by reason, so that the whole of that passion is entirely ceded to the Will; but yet the means prescribed, in order to attain the end, must be by reason, in this as well as all other passions, affections, or appetites, as would be very apparent, were we but to take the most transient view of the passion of love when degenerated into lust; what deep-laid schemes and contrivances are there prescribed to seduce the object fixed upon, and to draw her into those snares they have so privately disposed, in order to satisfy that brutal appetite, that it will be surprising if she escapes. But some, who have entertained an high opinion of this property, reason, think that the man who is so far sunk in brutal pleasures as to break through all bounds of honour, and even common honesty, to enjoy them, must have

forfeited all right to reason, and that he has reduced himself to the level with, if not below, the brute creation. And yet, I say, if we were to enquire into the matter, we should soon see, that the Will makes choice of the end, and reason concurs with the Will, and prescribes the means, in order to attain the end, be it ever so unjustifiable, without ever gainsaying or making so much as one remonstrance thereto. Whence arises this depravity in our nature, is not my business here to enquire, yet cannot but observe, that it is so in fact.

But let us now consider these two properties implanted in the soul, and after what manner they act in the sciences, where reason has made such wonderful discoveries. And even here we shall soon see, that the Will does of itself make choice of the end, and that reason does ever concur with the Will, and duly proportions the means to attain the end made choice of. The professors of the mathematicks tell us, that science is boundless, and yet reason is that property in the soul which ever pursues a series of argument to attain the end proposed, and by duly observing the relation one proposition has to another, demonstrates such propositions as are truly wonderful. Hence it happens, that reason has almost jostled the Will out of his place, and usurped the throne in the soul, as if all things were

were under his sole direction. It is true, this is not done by reason nor with reason, but only by inconsiderate men, who have conceived so high an opinion of this noble property, as scarce to allow any other a place in the soul at all, at least not that which is proper to it. The affection of knowledge is placed in our soul, to excite us, not only to know our Creator as far as we are able, for he is in deed and truth incomprehensive, but likewise to view him in his works; and here we find every thing duly proportioned, in order to attain the end it was designed for; and the more curious our enquiry is, the greater will our astonishment be; and therefore when this affection is raised in the soul with great warmth and heat, and the Will influenced thereby, it will be in proportion thereto, and accordingly make choice of that end, as indeed it is a most noble one, and the Understanding will as duly proportion the means to attain it. Observe the man whose affection for knowledge in the mathematicks is highly fired, the Will is in proportion influenced, and becomes so fixed and steady, that no other object is so much as suffered to interfere, but the mere necessities of nature, and them very sparingly, and reason duly proportions the means. And hence it is that some men have made such great improvements and new discoveries in that science. But he whose affection

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tion is but warm in the desire of that knowledge, his Will is not so strongly influenced, and consequently other objects are easily suffered to offer themselves; and if the Will be influenced by any of them, reason immediately concurs with the Will, and leaves off the operation, which tended to demonstrate some proposition, by which the Will was before influenced, and points out the means which may be necessary to attain the end, by which the Will is now influenced, without the least remonstrance. Hence we may account for the behaviour of those men, who are ever pursuing yet never come to perfection in any thing, viz. the mutability of their Will, which is influenced by any object that offers itself, and occasions an instability in all their actions. Whence it follows, that the Will is sole governor, and does of itself make choice of the end, and reason does only point out the means in order to attain the end made choice of by the Will, even in those sciences where reason appears in the utmost perfection. And it is the same in all other arts and sciences; the more or less the affection of knowledge in any art or science is heated, the more or less strongly is the Will influenced thereby; and hence it is, that we are the more or less steady in the pursuit thereof, without any regard to reason, as that has no concern in the choice of any end, but only points out the means

means in order to attain the end made choice of. As will appear if reason be called upon to shew the ill consequence of instability in our actions; for sure there must be such an affection implanted in the soul as a desire of perfection, so far at least as its nature is capable of. And if this affection be ever strongly excited, the Will is as strongly influenced, and reason, who ever concurs with the Will, as truly points out the means, and those are, that the Will be firmly fixed and very steady in the choice of the end, if he expects to arrive at any perfection in any art or science whatever. It is therefore evident, that reason concurs with the Will, be it stable or unstable, and always points out the means in order to attain the end made choice of by the Will.

As then it is evident that the end is made choice of before the means can be prescribed; and that there are such passions and affections implanted in the soul, and appetites and real wants in the body; and likewise external objects perfectly suited to gratify those passions and affections of the soul, as well as satisfy the appetites and wants of the body, and these are so self-evident that there can be no mistake about them; the Will in such cases cannot stand in need of the reasoning faculty to make its choice, nor is the Understanding ever concerned therein, but only prescribes the means in order to attain the end made choice

choice of by the Will. But then it may be asked, as the Will is so very capricious in his choices, as well as unstable, it seems to want a director and governor, and as reason is taken away, what is to be put in the stead thereof? the answer is very easy, viz. the Will of God.

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